

TRANSVERSE ELEMENT FOR A DRIVE BELT FOR A CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE TRANSMISSION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1 Field of the Invention

The present invention generally relates to a transverse element for a drive belt for a continuously variable transmission.

2. Description of the Related Art

The present invention relates to a transverse element for a drive belt for a continuously variable transmission having two pulleys having an at least partially conical contact surface for pairwise enclosing of the drive belt, each pulley being composed of two pulley sheaves, the drive belt comprising two endless carriers and transverse elements which are placed against each other in axial direction of the drive belt, wherein two subsequent transverse elements are tiltable relative to each other about a contact line, and wherein the transverse elements on both sides are provided with a supporting surface for supporting a carrier, which supporting surface transforms into a pulley sheave contact surface being designed to abut against a contact surface of a pulley sheave, through a transition region.

Such a transverse element is generally known, and is designed for application in a drive belt for a continuously variable transmission. Such a drive belt comprises two bundles of endless bands being shaped like a closed loop, which function as carriers of a number of transverse elements. The transverse elements are continuously arranged along the entire length of the bands, in order for them to be able to transmit forces which are related to a movement of the drive belt during operation.

The transverse elements are on both sides provided with recesses for at least partially receiving the bundles of bands. Further, the transverse elements comprise supporting surfaces for supporting the bundles of bands.

Furthermore, for the purpose of contact between the transverse elements and the pulley sheaves of the continuously variable transmission, the transverse elements on both sides are provided with pulley sheave contact surfaces which are divergent in the direction of the supporting surfaces. A supporting surface and a pulley sheave contact surface being situated at one side of a transverse element are connected to each other through a convex transition region. In the case of known transverse elements, the transition region has the same curvature radius along its entire length.

In case of a relatively small value being chosen for the curvature radius of the transition region, for example 0.3 mm, an advantage is that a relatively large pulley sheave

contact surface is obtained. Another advantage is that also a relatively large supporting surface results. However, there are also a number of disadvantages associated with the choice of a relatively small curvature radius.

A first disadvantage is connected to the production process of the transverse elements.

5 The transverse elements are formed from basic products being obtained by means of cutting. In practice, it was found that in case of a relatively small curvature radius of the transition region upsets arise in said region during further process steps, probably as a result of mutual contact between the basic products, or as a result of a finishing process, like in particular tumbling. Transverse elements wherein this is the case can cause damages onto the bands,
10 especially in case of the assembly of the drive belt, wherein the carrier is pushed into a recess of the transverse element along the transition region. Damages to the bands increase the chance of for example breaking of the bands.

A second disadvantage is that a transition region having a relatively small curvature radius is more sensitive to damage than a transition region having a larger curvature radius.

15 This effect is being contributed to by (Hertz) contact tensions which in first order are inversely proportionate to the curvature radius and which can occur in the transition region during finishing processes of the basic products of the transverse elements and during assembly of the drive belt. A damage of the transition region can cause a damage of the bands, as already indicated in the above.

20 It is true that applying a larger curvature radius for the transition region offers a solution to above-mentioned disadvantages, but in that case, a decrease of the pulley sheave contact surface occurs as important disadvantage.

Another disadvantage is that a decrease of the supporting surface occurs, in a similar manner.

25 It is an object of the present invention to shape the transition region such that the disadvantages of a small curvature radius are totally or at least partially dissolved, without the occurrence of disadvantages of a large curvature radius. According to the present invention, this object is achieved by providing for a transverse element of the type being mentioned in the first paragraph, which is wherein the transition region comprises two parts having
30 different curvature radii, wherein a first curvature radius of a first part near the side of the supporting surface is larger than a second curvature radius of a second part near the side of the pulley sheave contact surface.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention, a combination of two curvature radii is applied for the shape of the transition region.

5 Near the side of the supporting surface, the transition region has a relatively large curvature radius of for example 1.0 mm. As a result, a totally smooth surface will be obtained for the first part of the transition region during a finishing process of the basic products of the transverse elements.

Moreover, damage of the first part will occur less easy. An advantageous effect of this is that the chance of damage of the bands is very small.

10 Near the side of the pulley sheave contact surface the transition region has a relatively small curvature radius of for example 0.3 mm. Consequently, a relatively large pulley sheave contact surface is obtained.

In an advantageous embodiment of the transverse element according to the invention, the contact line intersects the pulley sheave contact surface. This is advantageous in connection to the stability of the transverse elements during a movement of the drive belt.

15 In a further advantageous embodiment of the transverse element according to the invention, the pulley sheave contact surface has a surface being corrugated by means of bulges, wherein the pulley sheave contact surface is connected to the second part of the transition region through a bulge. The second part having the relatively small curvature radius then transforms directly into the bulge.

20 Furthermore, the present invention relates to a drive belt being provided with transverse elements according to the invention, as well as to a continuously variable transmission being provided with said drive belt.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

25 The invention will be explained in more detail on the basis of the following description of a transverse element according to the invention with reference to the drawing, in which equal reference signs designate equal or similar parts, and in which:

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatical transverse view of a continuously variable transmission having a drive belt;

30 **Fig. 2** is a diagrammatical longitudinal view of a part of the transmission having the drive belt, which is shown in **Fig. 1**;

Fig. 3a is a transverse view of a transverse element and carriers of the drive belt;

Fig. 3b is a longitudinal view of a section along the line A-A of the transverse element which is shown in **Fig. 3a**;

Fig. 4a is a transverse view of a detail of a transverse element according to a first preferred embodiment of the invention; and

Fig. 4b is a transverse view of a detail of a transverse element according to a second preferred embodiment of the invention.

5 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

Fig. 1 shows diagrammatically a continuously variable transmission, such as for utilization in a motor vehicle. The continuously variable transmission is indicated in general by the reference sign **1**.

10 The continuously variable transmission **1** comprises two pulleys **4** and **5** being arranged on separate pulley shafts **2** and **3**. An endless drive belt **6** being shaped like a closed loop is arranged around the pulleys **4** and **5** and serves for transmitting torque between the pulley shafts **2** and **3**. The pulleys **4** and **5** are each provided with two conical sheaves **7** and **8** respectively **9** and **10**, which collectively form a partially conical receiving groove **11** in which the drive belt **6** is received.

15 The transmission ratio of the continuously variable transmission is determined by the ratio of the running radii of the drive belt **6** in the receiving groove **11** of the pulleys **4** and **5**. The running radii can be varied by mutually displacing the pulley sheaves **7** and **8** respectively **9** and **10** with the assistance of displacing means, which are not depicted for the sake of the simplicity. For this purpose, at least one of the pulley sheaves **7** and **8** respectively **9** and **10** is arranged in an axially movable manner. For the purpose of
20 transmitting torque between the pulley shafts **2** and **3**, the drive belt **6** is clamped inside the receiving groove **11** of the pulleys **4** and **5** with a certain clamping force.

 In **Figs. 2** and **3a**, the drive belt **6** is depicted in more detail. The drive belt **6** comprises two endless carriers **20** being disposed next to each other, which in this example
25 are each composed of a number of bands **21** forming a bundle of bands **22**. Along the entire length of the carriers **20**, transverse elements **23** are arranged, wherein the transverse elements **23** are mutually adjacent to each other and are movable in axial direction relative to the carriers **20**. For the sake of the simplicity, in **Fig. 2** only a few of these transverse elements **23** are shown.

30 In **Fig. 3a**, the carriers **20** and the transverse element **23** are depicted in transverse view. The transverse element **23** is on both sides provided with recesses **30** in which the bundles of bands **22** are partially received. Moreover, the transverse element **23** comprises on both sides supporting surfaces **31** on which the bundles of bands **22** are supported.

Furthermore, the transverse element **23** comprises on both sides pulley sheave contact surfaces **32**. When the transverse element **23** is inside the receiving groove, contact between the transverse element **23** and a contact surface of the pulley sheave is established through said pulley sheave contact surface **32**. A pulley sheave contact surface **32** and a supporting surface **31** which are situated at one side of the transverse element **23** transform into each other through a transition region **33**.

Two subsequent transverse elements **23** are tiltable relative to each other about a contact line **34** which extends between the two transverse elements **23**. As is shown in **Fig. 3b**, the contact line **34** is situated at the position where a slanting part **36** of a back surface **35** of the transverse element **23** is connected to a straight part **37** of said back surface **35**. When transverse elements **23** move through, for example, the receiving groove in one of the pulleys during a movement of the drive belt, the mutual contact between two subsequent transverse elements **23** is guaranteed along the contact line **34**.

In **Fig. 4a**, a detail of the transverse element according to a first preferred embodiment of the invention is depicted.

With this, the transition region **33** is shown, and also adjacent parts of on the one hand the supporting surface **31** and on the other hand the pulley sheave contact surface **32**.

According to the invention, the transition region **33** comprises two parts having two different curvature radii. With that, a first curvature radius of a first part **40** being situated at the side of the supporting surface **31** is larger than a second curvature radius of a second part **41** being situated at the sight of the pulley sheave contact surface **32**.

A suitable value of the first curvature radius is within a range of 0.5 mm to 3.0 mm, wherein, according to the invention, the value of the first curvature radius is higher than the value of the second curvature radius. Preferably, the first curvature radius has a value of 1.0 mm.

Suitably, the second curvature radius is smaller than 1.0 mm, and is in addition smaller than the first curvature radius, according to the invention. Preferably, the second curvature radius has a value of 0.3 mm.

In **Fig. 4a**, two possibilities of the known shape of the transition region having one curvature radius are depicted through dotted lines. A dotted line being indicated by the reference numeral **42** shows a possibility having a relatively large curvature radius, while a dotted line being indicated by the reference numeral **43** shows a possibility having a relatively small curvature radius. With this, insight is provided on the fact that a large curvature radius relative to a small curvature radius has the advantage that the transition

region **33** has a smaller curvature and consequently is less sensitive to damages. This also implies that a large curvature radius relative to a small curvature radius has the disadvantage that the pulley sheave contact surface **32** is smaller. In the shown example of a large curvature radius, the contact line **34** intersects the transition region **33**. This has a disadvantageous effect on the stability of the transverse element during a movement of the drive belt. When the transverse element is then inside the receiving groove between a pair of pulley sheaves, the transverse element will sooner be inclined to perform an undesired and disadvantageous tilting movement as a result of the relatively large radial distance between the contact line **34**, where during a movement of the drive belt a pushing force is applied between the transverse elements, and an effective point of application on the pulley sheave contact surface **32** of the frictional force which appears between the transverse element and a pulley sheave.

When, in **Fig. 4a**, the transition region according to the invention is compared to on the one hand a transition region having one relatively large curvature radius and on the other hand a transition region having one relatively small curvature radius, then the advantages of the shape according to the invention appear clearly. By means of the application of two curvature radii, a shape of the transverse element wherein the contact line **34** intersects the pulley sheave contact surface **32** is possible, and wherein the contact line **34** is also situated at relatively small distance from the supporting surface **31**, and with that from the carriers of the drive belt.

This contributes in a positive way to the stability of the transverse element during a movement of the drive belt.

Moreover, the first part **40** of the transition region **33** has a relatively small curvature, as a result of which the chance of damage is much smaller than in case of a larger curvature.

In **Fig. 4b**, a detail of the transverse element according to a second preferred embodiment of the invention is depicted.

Just like in **Fig. 4a**, with this the transition region **33** is shown, and also adjacent parts of on the one hand the supporting surface **31** and on the other hand the pulley sheave contact surface **32**.

In this second preferred embodiment, the pulley sheave contact surface **32** has an otherwise known surface being corrugated by means of bulges **50**. In this embodiment, the pulley sheave contact surface **32** is designed to contact a contact surface of a pulley sheave through the bulges **50**.

Preferably, the pulley sheave contact surface **32** is connected to the transition region **33** through a bulge, as is shown in **Fig. 4b**. Consequently, the second part **41** of the transition region **33** transforms directly into the bulge. An advantage of this shape is that the pulley sheave contact surface **32** extends beyond the contact line **34** as far as possible.

5 It will be clear to a person skilled in the art that the scope of the present invention is not limited to the examples discussed above, but that several amendments and modifications thereof are possible without deviating from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.